In the Matter Of:

PROPOSED RULEMAKING TO AMEND PARTS 701 & 703 OF 6NYCRR

HEARING

March 09, 2015



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HEARING March 09, 2015 PROPOSED RULEMAKING TO AMEND PARTS 701 & 703 OF 6NYCRR 1

1	NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION
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3	LEGISLATIVE COMMENT HEARING ON THE PROPOSED RULEMAKING TO AMEND PARTS 701 AND 703 OF 6NYCRR
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7	HEARING held at the offices of the ENVIRONMENTAL
8	PROTECTION AGENCY, 290 Broadway, 23rd Floor, New York,
9	New York, on Monday, March 9, 2015, at 12:00 p.m.,
LO	before Jeffrey Shapiro, a Shorthand Reporter and notary
L1	public, within and for the State of New York.
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L 4	B E F O R E: MOLLY T. MCBRIDE, Administrative Law Judge
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PROCEEDINGS

MS. McBRIDE: Good afternoon, everyone. My name is Molly McBride, I'm an administrative law judge with the New York City Department of Environmental Conservation, and presiding over this afternoon's legislative comment session.

The purpose of this session is to receive comments from the public regarding the proposed rulemaking to amend Parts 701 and 703 of Title 6 of the official Compilation of Codes, Rules and Regulations of the State of New York.

The purpose of this rulemaking is to change the right to require the quality of Class 1 and Class SD bathing surface waters to be suitable for primary contact recreation such as swimming; the rulemaking is necessary to meet the swimmable goal of the Federal Clean Water Act.

Notice of this hearing was published in various newspapers that are in the New York City area, serving this area, as well as the electronic publication, the Environmental Notice Bulletin, and in the State Register.

As I said, the purpose of this session is to receive comments. This is not a question and answer



PROPOSED RULEMAKING TO AMEND PARTS 701 & 703 OF 6NYCRR 1 DEC Public Hearing 2 session. If you do have any questions for DEC staff you 3 may raise them outside this hearing here today. In order to make a comment on the record we 4 5 will need you to fill out a speaker card. Cards are available at the table outside of the room. 6

If you 7 would like to make a comment, please make sure you fill 8 out that speaker card for us.

Public comments will be accepted until March So comments must be received by the Department by March 16, 2015 at 5:00 p.m. Out in the hallway at the table there we have both the e-mail address and the mailing address for where you will send those comments if you need it. You may also submit a written comment this afternoon and leave it with our staff.

Before we see if anyone here would like to make a comment, I want to introduce Scott Stoner from our Division of Water for a few comments.

> MR. STONER: Thank you, Judge.

Good afternoon everyone. I'm Scott Stoner, Chief of the Standards and Analytical Support Section in the Division of Water in the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation.

I have a short explanatory statement about the proposed rulemaking that is the subject of today's



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To protect water quality, the waters of New York State are grouped into classes with uses designated for each class, along with standards to protect their uses. There are five classes of saline waters defined in Title 6 of the New York Codes, Rules and Regulations, abbreviated 6 NYCRR, Part 701. These classes are SA, SB, SC, Roman Numeral I and SD.

The federal Clean Water Act requires that, where attainable, the quality of all waters "provides for recreation in and on the water." This is commonly referred to as the "swimmable" goal of the Clean Water Act and was to have been achieved by 1983.

Of the five classes of saline waters in New York State, only three of the classes SA, SB, and SC, are designated for primary contact recreation, which includes swimming. Class 1 and Class SD waters are not currently designated for primary contact recreation, and thus do not meet the swimmable goal of the federal Clean Water Act. The majority of Class 1 and Class SD waters are located in New York City, with a few waters located in Suffolk County.

The purpose of this rule is to ensure that the Class 1 and Class SD waters meet the swimmable goal



1 DEC Public Hearing 2 of the federal Clean Water Act. 3 The proposed rule would accomplish this by 4 requiring, in 6 NYCRRR Part 701, that the water quality 5 for Class 1 and Class SD waters be suitable for primary contact recreation, and in 6 NYCRR Part 703, by adopting 6 7 corresponding standards for total and fecal coliforms to 8 protect the quality of Class 1 and Class SD waters for 9 this use. 10 Thank you. 11 Thank you, Mr. Stoner. MS. McBRIDE: 12 At this time we have not yet received any 13 speaker cards. What I will do is keep the record open 14 for a few more minutes in case anyone is delayed getting 15 here, and then we'll close the record after that. 16 We have a speaker card for Rob Buchanan. 17 You may come forward and make your comment here. 18

MR. BUCHANAN: My name is Rob Buchanan. I'm co-chair of the New York-New Jersey Harbor Program Citizens Advisory Committee. I'm not here to offer testimony from that group. We have many comments and we will be presenting comments. A colleague of mine of that group will be presenting comments later if she can get in the door.

I'm here representing another group of the



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1	DEC Public Hearing
2	New York City Water Trail Association, and I have
3	written comments which I will present to you by e-mail,
4	the easiest way.
5	But I wanted to make three points in that
6	group's testimony.
7	And the first point is that, if you're going
8	to call something swimmable, that changes the game for a
9	lot of people. Our group does a survey of harbor
10	boaters every year. The last year we did it, in 2013,
11	we counted more than 60,000 individuals who were put on
12	the water by organized community boating groups. That
13	doesn't count individuals who launch themselves.
14	This is a really big number. Every year
15	that we've done this survey that number has grown.
16	We've got waterfront development and access points
17	expanding. That number is going to get big. If you
18	call water swimmable people are going to expect it to be
19	swimmable, and they'll want to know.
20	So, the first point is, how are you
21	measuring that? I don't think the harbor survey, which
22	is a great thing, and I don't mean to discredit the DEP
23	in any way, but it's not an accurate reflection of
24	harbor water quality recreation users.

I think you're going to have to expand your



1 DEC Public Hearing 2 data points. As a model I brought this. 3 (Indicating poster board.) 4 This is a citizens program that we run called Citizens Water. We do quality tests, and if you 5 6 look, we test at launch sites, a lot of them, more than 7 30. We test weekly, that's what the DEP does too. 8 Their test sites in the East River, if you look at 9 those, they've only got two in the middle stretch of 10 the East River. They've got 23rd Street and they test 11 at Hell Gate, and that's it. Two points, mid current, 12 mid channel, the results are different. 13 So, if you are really going to look at 14 water, look at where people are going to use the water, 15 because those numbers are going to be a lot tougher, and 16 I think you have to include them. So that's my first 17 point. 18 The second point is, monitoring and 19 notification, it's almost impossible for the public to understand the public agencies' monitoring efforts, and 20 21 their notificiation efforts are also difficult, they are 22 not really user friendly. If we go to swimmable water 23 designation, high expectations, that has to be reflected 24 in better monitoring and more interpretable results. Ιf

you look at the DEP's result pages on their website,



they are great, the data is great, but a member of the public can't make heads or tails of it, they really cannot.

I want to show you one more -- an example, I mentioned East 23rd Street as one of their sites. If you look at their results for 2014, during the 20 weeks we tested, every single result they have is less than 30. I'm talking about enterococcus, that's what we tested. Every single result is less than 30. That means swimmable across the board. Green, green, green all the way across the board.

If you look at our results from Stuyvesant, which is at 23rd Street, roughly, but we test near the shore, it's a totally different picture. It's about 55 or 60 percent green; but the other 35 or 40 percent is not green, does not meet swimmable standards.

So if you are going to use the results you have to be able to see them and ours side by side, and the public needs to understand those things.

So I think our model is good, I think the DEC's model is good, there are lots of good models for presenting, but the notification has to be better.

The third and final point. Enterococcus is the standard, what the City uses when they say you can



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2	go swimming at Coney Island or Staten Island, so it's
3	understandable for the public. At this point it's what
4	we use, what every citizen test group uses. And it
5	should be the standard. I know you have said in your
6	explanation that you envision this as a multi-part
7	thing, you want to start with the coliform standards and
8	switch over to enterococcus in the future.
9	But I think everything changes when you say
10	the harbor is swimmable, we're designating the water
11	waters as swimmable. I think you should be ready to
12	explain to people what that means. And if you don't
13	have the enterococcus standards in place, if you're
14	still using this other system, it's going to require the
15	public to translate from a language they don't
16	understand to another language they don't understand.
17	It's going to complicate things.
18	So, you're charging the game, it's a big,
19	big step, but be ready. Be ready on the PR front and on
20	the communications front, in those three areas.
21	Thank you.
22	MS. McBRIDE: We will go off the record for
23	a few minutes and give people time to come in, in case
24	they're delayed down at security.



(Recess taken.)

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MS. McBRIDE: For those who joined us, I understand there was a delay at security, so we did go off the record for a few minutes to allow people to get upstairs. We had one speaker so far.

What we're going to do now is call the other speakers who have signed up, and when I call your name I'd ask you to please come forward here and give your comments here at the podium.

Our next speaker is Marlene Donnelly.

MS. DONNELLY: I'm here to make statements for two organizations. I'm a member of the Gowanus Community Advisory Group under the Superfund Cleanup, and last month we passed a resolution specifically to make this entry into this statement.

The Cag is a 50 member organization compromised of organization members at large. It was formed in 2011 as part of the EPA Superfund action for the Gowanus Canal.

The first resolution was passed unanimously by this organization in 2012, was directed to the New York City DEP and copied to the New York State DEC and reads as follows:

"The Gowanus Canal Superfund Advisory Group hereby resolves that the water of the Gowanus Canal be



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reclassified from the current industrial standard designated Class SD. Class SD only mandates a minimal level of dissolved oxygen be maintained in the water, but placed no limits to the level of pathogens in the waterway.

"The request is that the Gowanus Canal be reclassified to protect -- given a water classification that protects this current recreation use, which includes contact recreation for families with children, and a reclassification that imposes limits on pathogenic levels of coliform and bacteria as necessary to insure that children and others are not exposed to unacceptable risks, including dangerous disease, due to the simple act of coming in contact with water while recreating on the Canal."

That was the resolution.

"We support any change New York City makes in terms of Class 1 and Class SD waterways that places new institutional control on the level of pathogens allowed in Class 1 and Class SD waters.

"However, the rulemaking does not affect the use designation for water classification. The above resolution to protect Gowanus recreation use includes contact recreation for families and children.



"The proposed rulemaking should not be a substitute for reclassification of water based on actual public use of the public waters. The Canal community still looks forward to a water reclassification based on actual use."

Passed unanimously February 24. That's submitted.

I'm also making a statement for the organization I represent called Friends and Relatives of the Greater Gowanus. We are concerned, we support the changes that there should be pathogen levels of control for all waterways in the City. But we are concerned that the way this is being proposed and the way water is being tested and assessed is not going to be truly protective of pathogens and people's use of the water.

We are concerned that the way the rules have been written that they're not going to actually mandate a whole lot of change in Class SD waters because of the way the testing is taking place in the so-called center of the waterways.

We ask that in moving forward here that we look for a better way to insure the way people actually come in contact with the water closer to the shore, that we become protective of people coming in contact with



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the water in situations where it's not expected to be, due to climate change and storm surges and other issues.

I wanted to relay a story that, during
Hurricane Sandy, after that issue, a community group
serving Thanksgiving dinners to people in Sheepshead
Bay, where we encountered one woman who had just been
out of the hospital prior to Hurricane Sandy. She found
herself the day of Sandy wandering in four feet of water
in our streets, the City of New York, with stitches,
having had open surgery days earlier.

And there are people being exposed to pathogens in a lot more intense ways besides choosing to recreate because of the climate change and the control of pathogens in unsafe conditions.

And particularly, the concerns of bacteria in the waterway that need to be controlled to CSA -- because New York City is, according to the Centers for Disease Control, has the highest rate of bacteria resistant infections in the entire country. It's becoming a greater concern that bacteria are being released into our communities more and putting people more at risk.

Our hospitals have the highest rates of antibiotic resistant bacteria, they use the sewer



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2	systems, and these elements would be released.
3	So we do want levels of control of
4	pathogens, so we're really going to address climate
5	change more. Thank you.
6	MS. McBRIDE: Diane Buxbaum?
7	MS. BUXBAUM: I'm a member of the same two
8	groups that the previous speak is a member of. I'm on
9	the Cag of the Gowanus Canal, and I am also a member of
10	I don't want to repeat word for word what Marlene
11	Donnelly just said, but I strongly support everything
12	that she said.
13	So if it means a statement that is exactly
14	as another statement, then you have two of them, and I
15	will submit that in writing.
16	What I am concerned about very often is the
17	ineffective and non-existent addressing of climate
18	change, and how we are going to clean up our waters.
19	It's the same thing that Marlene said. It's absolutely
20	accurate.
21	When I look at the shoreline rezoning law, I
22	think it was 2007 or 2011, I called people at the DEC
23	and the people doing the rezoning and said, "Are you
24	addressing climate change?" They said yes. There was

one tiny paragraph at the end of the rezoning, which



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2	actually didn't address anything about sea level rise
3	and storm changes.
4	I spoke to a person at DEP at a meeting near
5	Brooklyn Technical College in Brooklyn Heights, a DEP
6	presentation on best management practices. And I said
7	"Well, are you going to look at climate change?" At
8	that point well, that's too complicated. That struck
9	me as being ineffective, looking at what we need to do
LO	to protect waters.
L1	We have people in my neighborhood who go out
L2	rowing, they go out kayaking in the Gowanus Canal, and
L3	they take young people. We need to protect them from
L4	the pathogens in the water. And I think the way it's
L5	being proposed now, the protection will not exist. I
L6	hope we get a better set of proposals.
L7	Thank you.
L8	MS. McBRIDE: Thank you.
L9	Akila Simon?
20	MS. SIMON: Good afternoon, everybody. I
21	too agree with the previous speaker. I am the head
22	coach of the Empire Dragon Boat Team, and we do practice
23	our paddling throughout the duration of April through
24	October on Flushing Bay. And it is very disconcerting

for us because there's a lot of fecal matter in the



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water during high and low tide. Our cancer survivors, health is a major concern for a lot of us. I myself, as well other members on our team, have skin infections because of the contact with the water, because the quality is so poor.

So it is really a major concern for us to do our part to really force the government, DEC, DEP, EPA, to do something about cleaning up the waterways. Over the course of the summer we have over 2,000 padders go out into the water.

We really would like the designation changed to primary contact, merely because we are getting splashed, we're getting flipped, the boats. People do actually have contact with the water. It is very important that we do something.

We as a boating community have come together recently and formed something called Guardians of the Bay, where all of the dragon boat community have come together. We're talking about oyster testing, we're testing the waters during the summertime. We're really trying to think of ways that we can do our part, so we really would like to have the designation changed.

I think it is very important and it is our home, Flushing Bay is our home. For 2,000 recreational



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2	paddlers to move somewhere else, that's something that
3	is very troubling, especially when there's really
4	nowhere else for us to go to paddle. We compete.
5	Paddling is one of the fastest growing water
6	sports here, and dragon boat paddling in the United
7	States, and we don't have another place to call home.
8	So it's very important that we do our part and you all
9	do your part to really change the designation for
10	Flushing Bay.
11	Thank you.
12	MS. McBRIDE: Thank you.
13	Larry Levine?
14	MR. LEVINE: Larry Levine, I'm a senior
15	attorney with Natural Resources Defense Counsel in New
16	York. We are a non-profit environmental organization
17	working on clean water issues and a whole wide range of
18	other environmental issues. We're working on trying to
19	get the City to clean up its sewer overflows since at
20	least the 80s, probably the 70s. We have files in our
21	office going back, legal records to all those decades.
22	And so this is a really important moment
23	that we want the CDC to follow through on both the
24	proposal, also ongoing and beyond that, and I echo all

the concerns raised previously by the commenters I



heard, the last few I was here for.

The biggest concern that we have about the way that the proposal was framed is about whether it's actually changing the use designation. And that's a critical point of law, because it has changed the use designation, and that will in turn trigger application of federal beach act standards. Even though it's called the beach act, they apply not only to beaches, they apply to all coastal recreational waters, all of these fall in that definition. But it applies only to coastal recreational waters and that is defined for primary contact use.

So it's really important that the DEC make very clear in the language of the regulation that they are in fact changing designated use, and not merely saying there something else to use for the water quality issues.

Saying it ought to be swimmable is one thing, saying that the bacteria level amounts to swimmability is another thing. So the proposal right now is based on old standards from bacteria use, indicator organism, fecal bacteria, that is outdated science.

We understand the DEC is in the process for



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all the other waterways that are already designated for primary contact of updating that standard based on enteroacoccus bacteria, the best scientific standard. But the EPA has a new updated version of that standard in the last couple of years, and so it's critical that the DEC apply that enterococcus standard to protect public health in all these water bodies.

In terms of primary contact, there's one more thing I'd like to say. In many other jurisdictions, many other states, EPA regions in fact, team paddling, even power boating, should be primary contact recreation precisely for the reason the prior speaker mentioned, because you do in fact get wet.

Even if you don't intend to submerge yourself, you do not in fact wholly submerge yourself, you get wet enough that it amounts to primary contact.

I'm a kayaker myself, I'm sure many in the room are, you know some of the speakers already.

So it's a legal matter as well, the DEC in regulation should be treating kayaking, boat paddling as primary contact activity. And as a result, it exists for use legally, people are in fact doing it, and the DEC needs to protect that existing use under the Clean Water Act and comply with the law.



One last point, which I think someone else alluded to, is how compliance is measured with these standards. Typically sampling now is mid channel. People come in contact with the water much more frequently and extensively near shore. So the regulations ought to be clear as to how compliance is measured, and that should be measured based on near shore water quality, not after sewage discharges have been diluted further into the center of a stream, especially a flowing water body is going to be diluted rapidly towards the center, the Hudson River for example.

There's lots of kayaking going on, near shore is a lot more polluted than the center of the channel. It's an integral part of water quality, the cleanup to support primary contact.

And so I will close with that, and say that I support moving ahead with what the DEC has proposed, but further, submit that the DEC needs to go further at this time, not merely additional issues for a future date, to have a rule that fully complies with what the Clean Water Act requires to fully protect public health.

The rule language should be revised to further what appears to be DEC's intent, to in fact



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2 achieve that and protect public health and comply with 3 the law.

Thank you. 4 MS. McBRIDE:

5 Robert Bake?

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MR. BAKE: Hi, I'm Robert Bake, I'm president of the Brooklyn Bird Club. Of course I support the clean water around New York City. Primary use should be safe for people, no brainer. isn't already is unconscionable. I understand it's a difficult process.

I'd like to, as a member of the birding community and the environmental community, I'd like to say that it's not just for people, it's also for the wildlife that uses the waters of New York City.

I'm sure they are susceptible to the infections that people are, and there's also the whole ecosystem, especially I'm very familiar with Jamaica Bay, the fecal discharge from the sewage treatment plants raised the levels of bacteria and nutrients in the Bay and contributed to the devastation of our environment, the lack of resilience in the Bay.

The grasslands have been reduced 30 percent in the last 15 or 20 years. And they have been projected to lose all the grassland in Jamaica Bay, if



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the trend isn't reversed. It's being reversed, but especially in these times of climate change, we need the resilience of the bays, the waterways of New York City, returning the water to a natural state should be a primary purpose of EPA work, all our work.

> That's it. Thank you.

MS. McBRIDE: Thank you.

Shino Tanikama?

MS TANIKAMA: Good afternoon. My name is Shino Tanikama. I'm with the New York City Tunnel and Water Conservation District. Today I'm speaking as the alternate New York co-chair of the New York-New Jersey Harbor Citizen Advisory Committee. We submitted our letter a while ago. I will speak to what we already submitted, but I'd like the opportunity to share with the rest of the members of the public what we submitted.

We would like more clearly amended designated use. As Larry mentioned, I think the way to interpret the current proposal is changing the water quality standards without really explicitly changing the designated use. We would like to have the language changed to say that Class I saline surface water, the best usage of Class I waters are primary contact recreation and fishing.



We'd like to have the words "primary contact recreation" explicitly inserted into the section of the water quality standards that talks about the designated use and the best usage.

Likewise, for Class SD, we'd like the best usage of Class SD waters to be primary contact recreation and fishing. So we would like for inclusion of the word "primary in" that language.

We would also like to protect existing uses, and that might entail the New York DEC conducting a full assessment of existing uses. Beyond setting the goal for fishable and swimmable, which we are fully supportive of, I think we need to really look at how the water bodies are currently being used, and insure that we do everything to meet the goal, because the uses are already there as existing uses.

All I'm saying is, really, we don't want anybody to say we can't meet these water quality goals. We want people to really look at how the water bodies are used today without meeting these goals, so that we can meet the water quality goals.

We'd also like to switch to enterococcus as part of this amendment process. I understand the DEC will be switching to using enterococcus as an indicator



next year or the year after, but we think it would be prudent for us to actually do this now to avoid confusion in the future.

We also want water quality criteria to be relevant to the people who use the waters. What I mean is, the current standard is based on the geometric means over 30 days. However, people are using the water today or yesterday, on that particular day, to the users of the water bodies, the geometric mean over 30 days is irrelevant. You're exposed to a high concentration of bacteria on a given day, it doesn't really matter if the average is lower than the standard.

We would like something that is more relevant and more protective of the users of the body. Along the same line, I know as an environmental educator, I take small children to sample the water once a month throughout the year. Ironically, the only month that I don't sample is when school is not in session, July and August.

But the rest of the year I do go out to the river, fill up a bucket of water, and we do come into contact with that water. So in some places it may be prudent to look at year round water quality standards and not just seasonal uses.



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Again, I think if the DEC looks at the full existing uses and analyzes how the water bodies are being used, you would know which water bodies warrant year round protection.

Finally, we would like to know how this change will be integrated into the ongoing water quality improvement program, particularly the long term control planning process to the CSO and NS in the City.

We are presuming these standards will be incorporated into the planning process, but we would like clarity on how the City will amend the LTC plan submitted already, or if they are going to be resubmitting those plans. We need guidelines and clarification on that point.

Again, the City Advisory Committee of New York-New Jersey supports this initiative, but we'd like to see strengthening of the proposal.

Thank you.

MS. McBRIDE: Thank you.

Ate Atema.

MR. ATEMA: My name is Ate Atema, I'll be I'm speaking as a citizen, as a lover of this city, as a lover of cities in general, as an architect and somebody who's been working for the last three years



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2	in developing a strategy for preventing storm water from
3	combining with raw sewage to creat the CSOs that are
4	driving the problems we're speaking about today.
5	The really big picture for me is, this is an
6	opportunity for New York City to establish itself as a
7	leader in green infrastructure and demonstrating that
8	large cities can be responsible ecological citizens of
9	the planet. We all, I think, understand the benefits of
10	density, and I think any opportunity New York City has
11	to take leadership in that area should be embraced.
12	So that's, I think, something like the
13	primary contact recreation standards is the right goal,
14	it's a very simple one, it's clear, it's a goal I think
15	everybody agrees we want to get to. We want to be able
16	to swim in our waters, we want to able to fish in our
17	waters and to be able to know that sewage is not
18	discharged into our waters.
19	And so, I think there's an elegance and
20	simplicity to the goal, and we should get there as soon
21	as possible.
22	Thank you.
23	MS. McBRIDE: Thank you very much.
24	Dierdre Cossman?
25	MS. COSSMAN: Hi, my name is Dierdre Cossman



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2	and I'm member of the Empire Dragon Boat Racing Team.
3	And we practice on Flushing Bay, and obviously a lot of
4	the same points have been made already by Coach Akila
5	Simon.
6	And basically it's about not only the water
7	quality getting changed for the designation of these
8	waters to primary contact, because on a regular basis,
9	which is a few times a week, we're out there paddling
10	with hundreds of others every week, and there have been
11	incidents of infection and rash and things, just from
12	paddling and getting splashed by the water.
13	So it's important that the designation is
14	changed to be amended for not just water quality
15	criteria, but the actual language for primary contact
16	recreation.
17	Thank you.
18	MS. McBRIDE: Thank you.
19	Ira Gershenbaum.
20	MR. GERSHENBAUM: My name is Ira
21	Gershenbaum, I'm here representing myself and River
22	Keeper. Two points. One point is, I missed the first
23	part of this hearing because of the security procedures
24	outside. Many people are also coming in right now
25	because of that and missed much. I arrived early, not



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early enough, an hour early.

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The second thing is, I'm a swimmer, I like to swim in the Hudson River. The only thing that prevents me from currently swimming in the Hudson River is the fact I don't have access to it. Many who want to swim in the Hudson River are afraid of it. And this initiative should help that. Hopefully, at some point it will also help the fact that the bad news comes out whenever a swim, an organized swim, people come out with mustaches from the Hudson River because of sewage and things in the water.

Thank you.

MS. McBRIDE: Thank you.

Peter Molinski?

MR. MOLINSKI: I'm speaking from the New York Harbor Foundation, the oyster project. We do a lot of work, primary contact work, in the water restoring oysters to the harbor. So we have high school students diving in the water from the end of April through the end of November. So I echo the point of widening the season for primary contact uses, that we are in the water for July and August.

And just -- someone else mentioned -- more clarification -- I might have missed it, I was late,



1	DEC Public Hearing
2	based on the line what exactly the new designation
3	means, whether there's any action on DEC's part to
4	change the quality of the water or simply a designation
5	to change the I'm unclear about it.
6	MS. McBRIDE: Thank you very much.
7	Willis Elkins?
8	MR. ELKINS: I'm Willis Elkins, from the
9	Newtown Creek Alliance a couple of comments. One of
LO	the SD water bodies, which means one of most polluted
L1	the in the City. So generally, we're supportive of this
L2	effort.
L3	It's difficult for us to make progress on
L4	the waterway, especially with existing use saying there
L5	already are people recreating on the water. The agency
L6	says it doesn't matter, conditions don't reflect that.
L7	So, a couple concerns we have, though,
L8	because some of the places in Newtown Creek have such
L9	poor water quality, we're interested in knowing what the
20	mechanism is to enforce the compliance? We want to make
21	sure the responsible agencies are responsible for
22	cleaning that up and don't have a way of getting out of
23	this because conditions are so bad.
24	Does that make sense?
25	The other concern we have is about what it



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1	DEC Public Hearing
2	means for existing plans in place, including consent
3	orders. The Newtown Creek Alliance along with River
4	Keeper have been fighting a current consent order about
5	aeration at Newtown Creek for reasons actually over
6	public health.
7	And one of the issues we had is saying it's
8	not a public health concern, people are not supposed to
9	be recreating there anyway. We want to know what that
10	would mean for that, because right now the aeration only
11	addresses the oxygen level. The new level, the bacteria
12	level, does that mean the aeration program will have to
13	be entirely redesigned?
14	And going forward with future consent
15	orders, to promote presumably new standards, we want to
16	make sure there's an open process with the community.
17	The community was left out of a lot of these processes,
18	and I understand there's lots of concern over that, so I
19	want to make sure there's enforcement or a mechanism to
20	insure compliance of efforts.
21	Thank you.
22	MS. McBRIDE: Thank you very much.
23	That was our last speaker card. I will
24	repeat for those of you who were not here at the
25	beginning. The Department is receiving comments



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1	DEC Public Hearing
2	regarding this proposed rulemaking until 5:00 p.m. on
3	March 16.
4	If you'd like to submit comments, you may
5	mail them into Robert Simson at the New York State DEC.
6	The mailing address is 625 Broadway, Albany, New York
7	12233-3500. I will have Mr. Stoner here give the e-mail
8	address.
9	Sorry, we do have a couple more speakers.
10	Also, information for sending in comments is at the
11	table out in the hallway.
12	Noelle Thurlow is our next speaker.
13	MS. THURLOW: Hello, I'm Noelle Thurlow, I
14	run a small kayaking paddleboard company in Hoboken, the
15	other state across the river, the Hudson River. I bring
16	children, I do lessons for them and a small youth
17	program as well.
18	If you've ever done any paddleboarding, then
19	you know we're all in the water. We fall off all the
20	time, the children jump off, they love it. It's a
21	wonderful opportunity. I make sure to include
22	environmental education with every program that I do,
23	so they're learning to understand the Hudson River
24	estuary.
25	So I would love it for the water to be as



1	DEC Public Hearing
2	clean as possible for the children and all people that
3	use the water.
4	Thank you.
5	MS. McBRIDE: Thank you.
6	Karen Craddock?
7	MS. CRADDOCK: Hi. My name is Karen
8	Craddock. I'm a breast cancer survivor and I grew up on
9	Long Island on the North Shore near the Throgs Neck
10	Bridge.
11	I've always been afraid of the water quality
12	in the area on the North Shore of Long Island, going to
13	Queens where we did hang out.
14	I am a member of the Empire Cancer Survivor
15	Dragon Boat Team. I'm also a member of the Guardians of
16	Flushing Bay. This is a group of Dragon boaters who are
17	in the Flushing Bay who are concerned about the water
18	quality.
19	Our mission is to preserve and protect the
20	water quality of the Bay in order to save human contact
21	with the human body. I'm involved in the team because
22	we're very concerned about the environment and our
23	health risks due to the gradual destruction and abuse of
24	the ecosystem that New York has grown industrially over



the decades.

Why I'm concerned about the Bay is that it's the only protected bay in our area fit for human powered water sports and other activities that have incidental direct contact with the water.

Also, I see people fishing off the dock. I don't know if it's for personal consumption or illegal commercial comsumption, but I fear that toxic catch is ending up on a plate somewhere.

Personally, I have seen water pouring out of the CSO. It smells horrible, you can see sometimes a cloudy discharge in the water. I'm afraid that I will get sick or get an infection as many teammates have in the past. I'm trying to cover myself head to toe with as many layers as possible.

Even though our hands are in the water, we do get splashed all the time. We accidentally swallow it and it's not a pleasant experience.

What we want is the water quality be raised to a level where it's swimmable, at least when we have primary contact with the water to not feel as though we're in danger of harming yourself.

Paddlers have direct contact with the water.

I think it's assumed that we're above it so therefore
we're not near it, but we are in it. Please make



1	DEC Public Hearing
2	changes for us to be safe.
3	Thank you.
4	MS. McBRIDE: Thank you.
5	Maria Melian?
6	MS. MELIAN: I'm Maria Melian, I'm also part
7	of the Empire Dragon Boat Team. We're one of the many,
8	many dragon boat teams that use Flushing Bay as our only
9	lake, actually. It's a huge sport, started in Asia, and
LO	it's very strong in Canada and the West Coast.
L1	The water basically is filthy. Part of it
L2	is industrial waste, but most of it is from human sewage
L3	from the CSOs. And it's due to faulty engineering.
L4	This can be fixed. It takes time, it takes money and it
L5	takes effort, but it can be done.
L6	I lived here in the 70s, I saw the Hudson, I
L7	smelled the Hudson. It is a different thing now. I saw
L8	the tens, I see it now, it can be done. We just need
L9	everybody and we need the government to do something
20	about it.
21	And the idea somebody, I can't remember,
22	EPA had the idea of putting disinfectant in the sewers?
23	In the water? We're cancer survivors on our team.
24	That's not what we need. We don't need more chemicals
25	in our water. We need engineering solutions, which can



DEC Public Hearing

PROPOSED RULEMAKING TO AMEND PARTS 701 & 703 OF 6NYCRR

2 be done.

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3 Thank you.

Edith Kantrowitz? 4 MS. McBRIDE:

5 MS. KANTROWITZ: Hi, Edith Kantrowitz,

president of New York City Friends of Clearwater. Wе are a chartered club, the Clearwater organization originally started by Pete Seeger to clean up the Hudson River. And so we are continuing to work on cleaning up the Hudson River. Of course, we're very interested in the other waterways in the New York City area and making sure they're clean and swimmable and healthy for us to put our bodies into if we're going to swim and recreate in other ways.

So we would like basically to express our support for the proposed rulemaking, but there are some changes that we'd like to recommend. These were directly suggested by the Water Infrastructure Matters Coalition. You may have already heard them today because I came up late because of the line.

I'd like to reiterate our support for those principles that the designated used for Class SD waters should explicitly include primary contact recreation. We recognize that designated uses and water quality criteria should both be included.



1	DEC Public Hearing
2	Number 2, the DEC should survey and assess
3	how people are using the water so we have a better
4	picture of recreation.
5	Number 3, measures should be taken to make
6	sure that these criteria are integrated into the City's
7	sewage overflow reduction plans.
8	Number 4, the sample should be based on a
9	single sample approach rather than an average sample.
10	The DEC should revise the draft regulations
11	to insure that the EPA beach act standards apply to
12	these waters, and also for measuring the water quality.
13	The sample should be taken from the near shore areas
14	where people swim and are paddling, rather than out in
15	the middle of the water where people are not as likely
16	to be.
17	Again, we want to endorse the suggestions of
18	the Water Infrastructure Matters Coalition to see
19	everything is done to make the water as clean and
20	healthy as possible.
21	Thank you.
22	MS. McBRIDE: Thank you.
23	Robert Coover?
24	MR. COOVER: I'd like to add my support of
25	the points mentioned by the previous speaker endorse



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1	DEC Public Hearing
2	storm water matters, the ongoing existing use as primary
3	contact or recreation of these waters and support
4	general continuing use of such.
5	MS. McBRIDE: Thank you.
6	Mark Ringenary?
7	MR. RINGENARY: Good afternoon. I'm from
8	the National Park Service Gateway Recreation is our
9	name. We'd like to see more recreaction the City
LO	supporting it we have a number of people using
L1	recreational activities.
L2	We have a biologist in the park testing the
L3	water. I can tell you Jamaica Bay is very bad. I don't
L4	know the indicators the DEC looks at in the background
L5	people can get a false sense of security by passing
L6	measures.
L7	I'd love to have better control. I want to
L8	know there's monitoring to keep people safe who are
L9	using the water for specific recreational activities. I
20	want to inform the public if there's a problem I want
21	to know what kind of enforcement you will use to
22	regulate or try to control this, engineering-wise? How
23	to educate the public on these issues?
24	Again, it's a question for me that I see
25	people using the water who don't know there is a problem



	PROPOSED RULEMAKING TO AMEND PARTS 701 & 703 OF BINYORK 3
1	DEC Public Hearing
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3	One side comment before I'm done. I live on
4	Staten Island. After Sandy a lot of houses,
5	infrastructure, plus vegetation I see trees being cut
6	down all over the place. The tree program helps, but
7	the city parks, it wiped out the underbrush in certain
8	areas. Standing trees were impacted, high winds the
9	water system, its impact is a big issue in the City.
LO	Thank you.
L1	MS. McBRIDE: Thank you.
L2	Robin Kriesberg?
L3	MS. KREISBERG: Good afternoon. I'm Robin
L4	Kriesberg, I'm the policy director of Bronx River
L5	Alliance. We partnership to protect, improve and
L6	restore the Bronx River, and I'm also on the steering
L7	committee for the Storm Water Infrastructure Matters
L8	Group, a citywide coalition of more than 60
L9	organizations advocating for swimmable and fishable
20	waters in New York City.
21	We enthusiasticly support the proposed
22	amendments to set the water quality goal of all New York
23	City waters being swimmable, which would make the Bronx

River safe for primary contact.

Thanks to the tremendous efforts of



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DEC Public Hearing

community leaders, concerned citizens and government officials, the Bronx River has seen a remarkable resurgence since the 1970s when it was an abandoned dumping ground.

Today over 5,000 recreational boaters enjoy the Bronx River every year. We've opened up seven boat launches along the year when none previously existed. Over 9,500 students have touched or been touched by the river. We work with over 2300 educators who have made the river an outdoor classroom for hundreds of students ever year.

It's a testament to the progress that we've made, it came in 2012 when the National Park Service designated the Bronx River as a national water trail. The designated uses of waters of the river should be changed to primary contact to support a variety of recreational and educational activities already taking place on the river.

Human powered boats exposes people to the same risks as swimming, so that's why primary contact is really essential.

The Bronx River long term control plan process began in February, with a scheduled completion date of June of this year, and the water quality changes



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DEC Public Hearing

proposed by DEC should be incorporated into the planning process to insure that the final plan achieves water quality standards that protect the public and support existing uses of the river.

To insure the safety of those coming into contact with the river, as previously said, water quality criteria should be based on a single sample maximum testing approach rather than a 30 day means -- five samples per month. People don't come into contact with average water. The river should be safe for contact whenever they do come in contact with it.

In addition, testing standards should be revised to adopt modern scientifically supported, enterococcus based standards. Samples should be taken from near shore areas where people actually recreate rather than the middle of the water body.

Building on the great progress that's been achieved so far on the Bronx River, we urge DEC to make important regulatory changes to protect the many citizens who depend on a clean and healthy river so they can safely enjoy all the recreational and educational opportunities it offers.

MS. McBRIDE: Thank you.

Randy Ng?



DEC Public Hearing

MR. NG: Good afternoon. Thank you, everybody for your time at this meeting. My name is Randy Ng, I am one of the members affiliated with Flushing Bay, the dragon boat community. We've bonded together to call ourselves the Guardians of Flushing Bay.

I'm one of the coaches of another team. As you can see, we have quite a few members here today of the dragon boat community, representatives of the passion of the sport, most importantly of Flushing Bay.

We talked about the sport dragon boating, and I will try not to repeat what was talked about. Dragon boating is the ultimate team support. It's 22 people in a boat, ten on the left, ten on the right, brought together to race or to paddle together as one whole team.

As you can see, the Empire State Dragon Boat Team is a bunch of cancer survivors. On my crew, I'm actually the coach of 140 high school students yearly for the last 16 years.

What we're trying to do at Flushing Bay is to improve the quality of the bay so it's safe for them to paddle, but really to put forward support for the next generation, to teach these kids and have a safe



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place for them to go to paddle and to learn about leadership and adversity, working together using this sport called dragon racing.

Now, Flushing Bay is next to LaGuardia
Airport, we also have challenges there. There is a
sewage deposit, 1.1 million gallons of sewage is dumped
in, especially during a storm it's more problematic,
just because of the high levels of bacteria, e-coli.
Most of times what happens is, Flushing Bay is our only
home, where many people actually get sick and some have
severe cases that ended up in the emergency room.

The other two things that are in our community, we have two municipal sanitation areas that actually block the entrance, the sanitation building that's in our entrance; and the municipal waste facility in the back. At times you can tell that the municipal waste, the liquids come through the sewage and create the slick and smell and engage bacteria that are in our waters.

We also have two cement treatment plants, cement concrete plants, which one is owned by the Department of Transportation.

So what we're here today, to support and asking for help in education, we're asking for help in



1	DEC Public Hearing
2	learning what to do, how we can be part of this
3	community to improve the water system.
4	As you can see today, many of our team
5	members, our group, Guardians of Flushing Bay, have a
6	passion to be here to try to improve the water quality.
7	Again, for me as a coach, I'm also the coach
8	of Team USA. A lot of members train here on the
9	national level team. I ask for your help, not only for
LO	us, not only for the breast cancer survivors, but for
L1	future generations.
L2	Thank you.
L3	MS. McBRIDE: On behalf of the DEC I want to
L4	thank you all for coming out this afternoon and giving
L5	us your comments. Again, Comments will be received
L6	until March 16. Thank you.
L7	(Time noted: 1:06 p.m.)
L8	(Matter concluded.)
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CERTIFICATION
I, Jeffrey Shapiro, a Shorthand Reporter and
Notary Public, within and for the State of New York, do
hereby certify that I reported the proceedings in the
within-entitled matter, on Monday, March 9, 2015, at the
offices of the ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY, 290
Broadway, 27th Floor, New York, New York, and that this
is an accurate transcription of these proceedings.
IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my
hand this 19th day of March, 2015.
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JEFFREY SHAPIRO



HEARING March 09, 2015 PROPOSED RULEMAKING TO AMEND PARTS 701 & 703 OF 6NYIQER: 1..Advisory

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